

Conservation Committee
Draft Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2020

Present: Roland Payne, Dawn Andrews, Gary Gulka, Chris Duff, Cedric Alexander, Frank Kampf

Next Meeting: **March 9, 7:00 PM**

Draft minutes of December 9 approved without changes

Public Comment

No public comment

Town Meeting Day Grant Status

We were unaware of any problems with the Conservation Committee's grant proposal going forward until it did not appear on the town warning for Town Meeting Day. Gary attended a Select Board meeting in January and asked when the public hearing was scheduled for Town Meeting grants. He was told that it was February 27. When he saw that there was no warned article on the grant application in early February, he contacted the Town Clerk and one of the Select Board members by email. He then received notice that the Select Board was holding an emergency meeting on February 1 to discuss this. As of our February 10 meeting, he did not see any minutes posted on this meeting and did not know the details of why the grant was not warned for Town Meeting Day. Frank Kampf had a copy of the minutes from the February 4 Select Board meeting that made reference to a decision by the Select Board not to include the grant request in the warning because it did not receive the information from CCIF in a timely manner. Frank said that he provided the information to the Town Clerk in a timely manner (hand delivered) in early December after the CCIF approved the grant request to go forward. Frank said that he would be attending the next Select Board meeting on February 18 to discuss.

Public Outreach

It was agreed that the Conservation Committee will submit a Chronicle article on Landscaping for Nature. Deadline is March 15. It was also agreed that we would work with the library to sponsor a public presentation on natural landscaping with a target date of April 22 (Earth Day). Date will be need to be confirmed. Chris and Dawn will collaborate on the presentation. An article will also be prepared on simple actions to help birds, modeled after a Cornell Lab of Ornithology brochure entitled *7 Simple Actions to Help Birds*. Gary will take the lead on this. It was agreed that we will work with the library to sponsor a public presentation/discussion of the PBS News Hour documentary, *The Plastics Problem*. Ben Davis, our solid waste district representative would participate in the discussion. Gary will work with the library on possible dates.

The Vermont Center for Ecostudies has agreed to do a public presentation on Grassland Birds. Gary will work with the library on a possible date.

Dawn will look into obtaining the documentary, *Green Fire*, relating to Aldo Leopold's land ethic, for public presentation. This film will be shown at the Peacham Library on March 1 at 4:30 pm.

No decision made on developing a regular column in the Cabot Chronicle (*Conservation Corner*) to answer questions from the public. It was suggested that we wait until the Chronicle becomes a monthly rather than bimonthly publication.

Potential Grant Project with High Meadows Fund - Forests and Flood Resiliency

The High Meadows Fund has approached the Friends of the Winooski to apply for funding to continue work on managing forests for flood resiliency in a two-year project. Phase 1 of this project was completed last year, involving the towns of Cabot, Marshfield and Plainfield. The Conservation Commissions in the three towns have been asked to consider whether they would be willing to participate in a collaborative outreach and education project. There is general support for the project and it aligns with our interests in forest stewardship and public outreach. Volunteer time is limited and we must be clear on time commitments and specifics of the deliverables/outcomes as we move forward. Gary will attend a February 20 meeting where Friends of the Winooski and representatives of the three towns will discuss their interest in moving forward on a grant proposal and relaying our comments.

Meeting Schedule

It was agreed that we would continue to meet bimonthly, but add additional meetings when necessary. It was decided that we would meet next month in March.

Creating a Conservation Resource Section in Cabot Library

Discussion postponed until next meeting in March